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ABSTRACT

This is a background paper prepared for the conference "Community Colleges and Low Income Populations: Lessons from Research... Priorities for Policy." The paper sets out the framework that informs the conference. The author seeks to answer the question: What strategies, practices, and policies are needed if community colleges are to help people of all academic backgrounds gain skills and credentials that can move them toward self-sufficiency and the ability to keep learning and advancing? The paper notes that, according to Carnevale and Fry, in 1959 20% of workers needed at least some college for their jobs, while today 56% do. In addition, the unemployment rate for a high school dropout is typically at least four times that of a college graduate. The increasing size of the youth population promises to add two million new young people to the ranks of those who are unlikely to go to college, and at the same time a larger proportion of the youth cohort will be seeking college credentials. The number of minority 18-24-year-olds will increase by 40%. This paper stresses the need for focused outreach and recruitment and retention programs for first-time college goers, new immigrants, and other underserved populations. (Contains 34 references in an annotated bibliography.) (NB)

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Community Colleges and Low Income Populations

A Background Paper

By **Richard Kazis**
Jobs for the Future

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Prepared for Community Colleges and Low Income Populations: Lessons from Research . . . Priorities for Policy

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COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND LOW INCOME POPULATIONS*
A Background Paper

Prepared for
Community Colleges and Low Income Populations: Lessons from Research . . . Priorities for Policy

By Richard Kazis
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Why This Conference Now?

The community college has great potential to be the lead local institution for helping low-income individuals obtain credentials and skills they need to advance to further education and better careers. At the same time, this uniquely American institution faces serious challenges and obstacles to achieving its potential. Without significant changes in their practices, priorities, and policies, many community colleges are unlikely to meet rising expectations regarding their effectiveness.

The question that many researchers, practitioners, policymakers, and advocates are asking is: how can we help these institutions reach their potential in relation to low-income populations? *What strategies, practices, and policies—internal, regional, at the state level, and in federal policy—are needed if community colleges are to help people of all academic backgrounds gain skills and credentials that can move them toward self-sufficiency and the ability to keep learning and advancing*?

This is the question that participants will explore at the upcoming conference, *Community Colleges and Low Income Populations*. Organized by Jobs for the Future and cosponsored by the Annie E. Casey, Ford, and KnowledgeWorks foundations, this meeting brings together experts from the worlds of research, policy, and practice, both within and outside the community college world.

Conference participants are a varied group. Some are concerned with how to help young first-generation college-goers succeed in earning a degree. Some are frustrated with the workforce development system of short-term training programs delivered in community-based organizations with limited capacity and few connections to employers. Others are impressed with the growing role of community colleges in regional economic development and the preparation of adult workers for advancement into better paying jobs. Some have an allegiance to the community college as an institution; others' primary commitment is to helping low-income single parents, or new immigrants who speak little English, or unemployed men who lack the skills to make it in a service-oriented economy. Participants include researchers mining data to understand the diversity of trajectories to and through the community college; policymakers concerned about maximizing the value of public education investments; college leaders trying to move their institutions in new directions; and foundation officers eager to promote change on behalf of poor people.

* Jobs for the Future appreciates the generous support for this project provided by the Annie E. Casey, Ford, and KnowledgeWorks foundations.

What links conference participants is their fervent belief that the community college is a critically important institution (for many, *the* primary institution) for addressing a rising demand for postsecondary education and training among the disadvantaged.

This meeting has three distinct purposes:

- Strengthen the network of people who care deeply about improving community college outcomes for low-income youth and adults;
- Specify strategies and policies that can make it easier for community colleges to help more low-income youth and adults enroll in quality learning programs, complete programs that yield valuable credentials, and transition to further education, employment, or both; and
- Identify priorities for action to advance this agenda.

This background paper sets out the framework that informs the conference. It begins with a summary of factors that have brought the community college to the fore as the institution that can best serve low-income individuals' learning and advancement needs. The next section addresses the ways in which community colleges can fall short of that potential. The paper then highlights approaches that innovative colleges are using to address challenges in the area of access to degree programs, retention and success in college programs, and advancement for low-skill individuals into programs that open doors to better jobs and income and further educational opportunity. Throughout, the paper identifies issues and approaches that will be the focus of presentations and discussions at the upcoming conference.

Context: Rising Expectations for Community Colleges

Several factors drive the growing interest in making community colleges the lead regional institution for educating and training low-income youth and adults. These include:

- Economic changes that are making postsecondary credentials a minimum requirement for labor market success;
- Demographic forces that are putting pressure on the higher education system—and on community colleges in particular—to better serve low-income and low-skill populations; and
- The assets that community colleges bring to helping low-income Americans prepare for success in the economy and in higher education, particularly compared to the track record of other first- and second-chance system institutions.

The Economic Context

The premium on academic achievement has risen significantly in past decades: some postsecondary learning is all but a prerequisite to success in the labor market. Employers are also looking for non-academic, general traits, such as persistence and work ethic, from potential employees; many see postsecondary success as a proxy for those traits. A few statistics demonstrate the changing relationship of educational attainment to economic success:

- In 1959, only 20 percent of workers needed at least some college for their jobs. Today 56 percent do (Carnevale and Fry 2000, p. 33).

- The earnings advantage of workers with a degree from a four-year college over high school graduates has risen sharply since 1979. For men, the college premium has risen from 36 percent to 67 percent; for women, from 34 to 72 percent. For those with associate degrees the premium is smaller but has also increased markedly (Carnevale and Desrochers 2001, pp. 53-54). This rise in the college premium occurred during a period when the share of the labor force with a college degree increased significantly, reaching 30 percent in 2000 (*Postsecondary Education Opportunity* 2001, p. 9).

- The unemployment rate for a high school dropout is typically at least four times that of a college graduate. In 2000, unemployment for high school dropouts nationally was 7.9 percent, compared to 3.8 percent for high school graduates, 3 percent for those with an associate degree, and 1.5 percent for those with a Bachelors degree or more (*Postsecondary Education Opportunity* 2001, p. 14). Higher rates of unemployment exacerbate prior disadvantage: the steadier one's employment, the more likely one is to secure opportunities for training and learning on the job that contribute to further income gains and career advancement.

Many within the community college world see in these trends an opportunity and an obligation to help lower-skill and lower-income individuals get skills and credentials that can help them advance. As Ned Sifferlen, president of Sinclair Community College, has put it, "We see our job as helping people move from a future of $7 an hour jobs to one where $17 an hour is the norm."

The Demographic Context

Demographic trends are also raising the interest in community college practice and effectiveness for low-income populations.

Tony Carnevale and Donna Desrochers have estimated that the "baby boom echo"—children of the baby boom generation who are heading through the educational system—will require colleges and universities to absorb 1.6 million 18-24-year-olds above current levels during the next decade. In addition, the increasing size of the youth population will add more than 2 million young people to the ranks of those who are unlikely to go on to any postsecondary education (Carnevale and Desrochers 2001, p. 77). At the same time, because this generation of parents has a larger proportion of college graduates than its predecessors, a larger proportion of this youth cohort will seek college credentials than in the past. Together with economic factors increasing the demand for higher education, these demographic forces are reversing the trend of the 1980s and early 1990s, when college enrollments rose relatively slowly and students over 25 years of age were the main source of growth.

The changing composition of the youth population in need of and demanding postsecondary credentials poses significant challenges to "business as usual" for two- and four-year colleges and universities. In the coming boom, the number of minority 18-24-year-olds will grow by 3.5 million, or 40 percent (compared to only a 4 percent growth in the number of white youth). About half of the growth in the 18-24-year-old population will be among Hispanic youth. Hispanic undergraduate numbers are projected to grow by 73 percent by 2015, with Hispanics passing African Americans as the nation's largest college-going minority by 2006 (Carnevale and Fry 2001, p. 23).

The Equity Agenda

The longstanding failure of either the first- or second-chance institutions in our country to provide adequate education and training to large segments of the population is a further factor drawing attention to community colleges as a preferred route to advancement for low-income youth and adults.

As is well-documented, the first-chance system of public schooling fails many young people, particularly in low-income and minority communities. Fourteen percent of American young people fail to earn a high school diploma or GED. The percentage earning GED credentials is actually on the rise, while the percentage of young people earning traditional diplomas is slipping (McCabe 2000a, p. 26). In some urban areas, dysfunctional high schools see half or more of their entering students fail to graduate. And among those who graduate, many are inadequately prepared academically for college success.

The four-year college system, the postsecondary route with the largest economic payoff, poses formidable obstacles to low-income individuals, even those who are academically prepared for college success. Although college-going rates for American youth have climbed in the past two decades, large inequities persist. There has been little change during the past three decades in the more than 30 percentage point gap between college entry rates among low-income (under $25,000) and high-income (above $75,000) families. Minimally qualified low-income high school graduates enroll in college at half the rate of similarly qualified high-income graduates. Perhaps the most troubling statistic is this: among young people from the lowest socioeconomic quartile, only 6 percent earn a Bachelor's degree, compared to 40 percent among those in the highest quartile (Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance 2000, p. 4).

The second-chance system that has historically served those who are not equipped for college or career success is also deeply flawed. Training programs funded through federal programs have a long track record of failing to help poor people improve education and earnings significantly. Typically too short to help participants overcome basic skills deficiencies, plagued by poor instruction, and rarely tied either to next steps in an educational ladder or to employers and income-improving career ladders, publicly funded training programs rarely alter the economic prospects of participants (even when benefits outweigh public costs and employment and earning effects are statistically significant). Welfare reform that has made "work first" the priority at the expense of skill development has erected additional obstacles to publicly supported skill development for low-income people.

The adult basic education and English as a second language programs available to workers with limited basic skills are plagued by many of the same problems as the training system: limited ladders to postsecondary credentials that have economic value, weak instructional practice and professional development, and insufficient learning expectations and gains.

The range of institutions and learning programs that make the United States such an extraordinary place for many people to study and learn fall short for low-skill, low-income populations. As the economic prospects for those without postsecondary credentials darken and the availability of family-supporting jobs that do not require postsecondary learning continues to shrink, policymakers and researchers have turned to the community college as a mainstream educational institution that is well-positioned to help low-income youth and adults advance in educational attainment and economic success.

Potential Versus Reality

The argument in support of this central role for community colleges is articulated by W. Norton Grubb (2001) in a recent paper, "Second Chances in Changing Times: The Role of Community Colleges in Advancing Low-Skilled Workers." According to Grubb, the comprehensive community college has the following advantages for serving low-income and low-skilled individuals compared to both more specialized second-chance programs and four-year colleges and universities.

- Because community colleges offer a wide range of programs in fulfillment of their multiple missions, from short-term training programs to two-year associate degrees, they have the potential to serve as a bridge from short-term training to mainstream education.

- Because community colleges offer remedial, vocational, and academic courses, it is possible for students to navigate from different entry points to a range of program options, and it is also possible for the college to develop hybrids that can accelerate progression through developmental courses or combine academic and vocational learning, all at the same institution.

- Community colleges can develop courses and programs that mirror and respond to the local labor market and employer community. In this, they are far more flexible and oriented to employer needs than four-year institutions.

- Community college credentials have a significant payoff in the labor market: a two-year degree can increase income an average of 20 to 30 percent over a high school diploma; for women, even a one-year certificate yields a 20 percent earnings jump over a high school diploma. Community college credentials open up higher-skilled occupational categories for completers and are associated with lower unemployment than a high school diploma or less.

- Community colleges "belong to the culture of education rather than training." They have a commitment to quality instruction and being a teaching institution.

In Grubb's view—one that is shared by many at this conference—the community college is well-positioned to provide the kinds of instructional programs, support services, connections to employers, and credentials with economic value that low-income youth and adults need to succeed in postsecondary education. And, for students, they can do so at a much lower cost and time commitment than four-year institutions.

Americans have demonstrated that they understand the potential value of community colleges. The percentage of freshmen enrollees going to two-year public institutions rose from 17 percent in 1955 to close to half today. And the number of Americans taking non-credit continuing education courses and training at community colleges has risen steadily to its current level of more than five million individuals a year.

However, as Grubb and others are quick to point out, the potential that community colleges represent is not easily realized.

Using High Schools and Beyond survey data from the 1980s, James Rosenbaum (2001, p. 66) concluded that only 18 percent of seniors who said they planned to get an associate degree

earned an AA or higher after ten years. For students with a C average or below, the percentage dropped to 8 percent. This reflects, in part, the tendency of most high school students to say they plan to go to college, whether they are academically ready or not. However, national statistics on community college graduation and retention rates are not particularly encouraging.

According to one study, close to half (48.6 percent) of community college students enrolled in 1989-90 had not earned a degree and were not enrolled five years later (Berkner et al. 1996, Table 2.1). There are many reasons for this: some students only plan to take a few courses, do so, and move on; some drop out because of family or work-related reasons, not because of academic failure. There is little question, though, that attrition and non-completion is not a trivial problem.

A study of 1990 students conducted for the National Center for Educational Statistics found that 22 percent of all community college students—and 39 percent of those who started their programs intending to transfer—successfully made the transition to four-year programs. (Coley 2000, pp. 13-15) Tracking of transfer rates in over 400 colleges finds a similar outcome: about 22 to 23 percent of students transfer to four-year colleges within four years of entering community college (Hungar and Lieberman 2001). Students who transfer into four-year college appear to do as well as those who start out in four-year schools, but many more start college intending to transfer than succeed in meeting that goal.

Not surprisingly, minority students, low-income students, and recent immigrants have the greatest difficulty climbing the steps of the educational ladder to associate degrees. African Americans, who represent 16 percent of the 15-18-year-old population, earn only 10 percent of all associate degrees. Hispanics, who constitute 14 percent of the 15-18-year-old population, earn only 7 percent of associate degrees (McCabe 2000b). The groups for whom the community college holds out significant promise clearly need more support, guidance, and help.

For adults, other challenges dampen the value of the comprehensive community college as a many-entried institution that can lead to economically valuable credentials. Culture and policies often keep the non-credit programs and the credit courses far apart from each other. Those with serious developmental needs often have difficulty moving quickly enough through remediation into credit courses: many drop out before earning credentials they can use in the labor market. Many low-skilled working adults cannot qualify for entry into occupational programs that yield credentials and open opportunity for higher-paying employment. For working adults, the flexibility of the community college course scheduling compared to four-year colleges is significant, but it is often insufficient to enable individuals to complete a course sequence efficiently or earn partial credentials, stop out, and come back later.

Strategies for Serving Low Income Populations More Effectively

The community college serves a broad range of learners and would-be learners: high school graduates looking for a lower-cost college program close to home; adult workers seeking to switch jobs or to advance in their existing field; high school dropouts and others with serious learning challenges; "experimenters" who are trying to figure out what their next career move might be. By and large, this is a population that works half-time or more, has limited income or savings to spend on education, and is more likely to have dependents and be balancing not just work and learning but also family responsibilities. It is an extremely diverse population, with different strengths and needs.

Some segments of this population are easier to serve than others: skilled workers coming back for technical upgrades so they can advance in their field or middle class students who have clear postsecondary aspirations. And some are particularly difficult to serve successfully: the long-term unemployed; those whose reading and math skills are below high school level; adults who have failed in school earlier in their lives; young people with weak academic preparation and little motivation.

The varied skill levels, needs, and motivations of those seeking services at community colleges would challenge any institution. For community colleges committed to expanding and improving services to low-skill and low-income individuals, the high concentration of students with both serious academic deficiencies and personal circumstances that make them a high risk for dropping out constitutes perhaps the toughest program design and fiscal challenge they face.

Research on higher education persistence has identified seven characteristics that put someone more at-risk of failing to complete a postsecondary learning program: late entry into college, part-time enrollment, full-time work, financial independence, having dependents of one's own, single parent status, and no high school diploma. Community college students as a group are three to four times more likely than four-year college students to have any one of the seven characteristics, according to the National Center for Educational Statistics. New enrollees in community colleges are four times as likely as their four-year college counterparts to have more than half of the seven at risk factors (Coley 2000, pp. 13-14).

Colleges that are making a serious commitment to serving low-income populations more effectively—and there are many around the country experimenting with strategies to do so—must find effective, affordable ways to provide specialized services to distinct hard-to-serve populations within a comprehensive institution. This commitment requires approaches that are targeted and relatively customized to particular subgroups (e.g., immigrants, working adults, first-generation college-goers) but that are also linked in clear and transparent ways into coherent pathways that can lead any student toward credentials valued in the labor and educational markets. Toward this end, innovative colleges are focusing in different ways on the three critical points in an individual's trajectory through the institution:*

- Access to credential programs;
- Retention of students who are at risk of not completing their educational program; and
- Advancement into further education or employment that can pay a family-supporting wage.

Access to College

Many community colleges realize they can—and must—do more to reach disconnected local residents who stay away because of lack of knowledge, fear of the unfamiliar, past failure, or confusion about costs and schedules. At the same time, they realize that some obstacles facing low-income populations are set outside their institution, through state and federal financial aid and financing policies. This conference will highlight strategies for addressing several major obstacles to expanding access for less-skilled low-income individuals. These include:

* The conference structure will follow this framework.

- Focused outreach and recruitment strategies that reach low-income individuals, particularly first-generation college-goers;
- Structural alignment with high schools and other educational programs that can ease the transition to college; and
- Financial aid that takes into account the realities of balancing work, school, and family obligations and that is sufficient to meet the needs of low-income students.

Focused outreach and recruitment: For young people in high school, some colleges are making significant strides in outreach to first-generation college goers, new immigrants, and others who could benefit from continuing on to postsecondary programs.

San Jacinto North Community College provides an example of how one college has improved its outreach to underserved populations. This largely rural, Houston-area college, with about 5,000 students enrolled in AA and AAS programs, was slow to adapt as the community it serves became increasingly Hispanic in the 1980s. Traditional recruitment strategies were not working in a community where fewer than 10 percent of the families were headed by a parent with a college degree. In response, San Jacinto North hired several "enrollment specialists," at least one of whom was bilingual in Spanish and English, to work with local high schools, alternative schools, churches, and community centers. The college simplified the enrollment process and made sure that potential enrollees were welcomed and given adequate support. Enrollments have risen dramatically in the past five years, and the student body is now far more reflective of the local population.

Dual enrollment and other structural approaches to recruitment: In recent years, there has been steady growth in programs designed to improve the alignment and integration of high school and postsecondary institutions and programs, partly for the sake of efficiency and better signaling of academic expectations—and partly as a way to cement closer relationships between students and postsecondary options while young people are still in high school. The many variants of these strategies range from college courses taught on high school campuses and high school students attending classes at local colleges to new schools that provide accelerated associate degree programs for high school students. TechPrep programs encourage better alignment of high school and community college occupational programs. Middle colleges, of which there are a few dozen nationwide, situate high schools for dropouts or at-risk youth on community college campuses. At Salt Lake Community College, the enrollment of high school students rose rapidly several years ago when Utah offered two years of free college tuition to any high school student who completes the requirements for an associate degree by the September after senior year. Over 10,000 young people are now dual-enrolled at SLCC.

These strategies might be important ways to improve academic achievement, link young people more effectively to postsecondary programming, and lower the costs of expanded higher education to both families and the public sector. Vermont Community College, for example, is looking to dual-credit strategies as a way to help young people of average potential avoid "lost years" after high school and move more efficiently into college programs. However, the ultimate relevance of these approaches to low-achieving young people depends upon which young people are being targeted for dual enrollment. Most dual-enrollment programs are open to students performing well in high school (B average or above) but who are unlikely to head directly to four-year college. These programs typically are not available to lower-achieving students for whom the motivation and challenge might be helpful.

A different but related model is to attract out-of-school or low-achieving youth directly into community college programs that enable them to earn high school credentials quickly and move right into college courses. Portland Community College has used this approach to become the single largest grantor of high school credentials in Oregon, enabling students to gain that credential and continue on at the college.

Financial Aid: While community colleges are less costly than four-year colleges and universities, money is still a significant barrier for potential students. Many existing financial aid programs (federal, state, and institutional) provide minimal help to low-income working students. Tax-based programs are typically non-refundable and therefore worth far more to middle- and upper-income families. Most financial aid programs are not available to students in non-credit or non-degree programs or to those who are enrolled less than half-time or move in and out of college. Financial aid programs typically cover only tuition and related expenses, leaving students to cover the more significant costs of child care, transportation, and living expenses. Significantly, as more students turn to loans in response to the diminution of need-based grants, they take on debt and obligations that are highly correlated with dropping out and failing to complete a degree (Golonka and Matus-Grossman 2001, p. 23)

Strategies to help low-income students afford college are primarily matters of state and federal policy, not college practice. Some states have used TANF resources packaged with other state dollars to create innovative options for financing programs for part-time and/or non-degree students, particularly the TANF-eligible population. The reauthorization of the Higher Education Act in 2003 may afford an opportunity to expand financial aid support for low-income community college students in credential programs. Reauthorization of TANF may also provide opportunities to expand student aid.

Retention and Persistence

For working individuals—and most community college students work, especially those who are no longer dependents—enrolling in community college is one challenge; staying in and completing a program is quite another. Many community colleges have begun to look more systematically at practices and policies that can help them keep students longer and help more students achieve their educational goals.

The Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation and the National Governors Association recently published *Opening Doors: Expanding Educational Opportunities for Low-Income Workers*, a report on strategies for improving retention of low-income students in community colleges (Golonka and Matus-Grossman 2001). The report highlighted strategies that innovative colleges and states are using to support the efforts of working individuals, particularly non-dependent adults, to stay enrolled and succeed. Based on focus groups with students and roundtables with state and college leaders, the report identifies a number of innovations that might help low-income students. They include:

- *Student support centers*: to address the need for greater counseling and busy schedules;
- *Co-location of public agencies on campus*: to make it easier for students to take advantage of and negotiate the terms of involvement with work-based, publicly funded, safety net services and assistance;

- *Short-term certification programs*: modularized, compressed, and other program redesign options to make it easier for working adults to gain credentials while balancing work, family, and education;

- *On-campus child care*: particularly on nights and weekends, to make it easier for students with children to stay in school and meet their children's needs;

- *Financial aid for working adults*: to make financial aid easier to secure for non-traditional, low-income students;

- *Improvements in developmental education*: to increase relevance, promote effective teaching methods, and help students advance quickly to occupational credentials;

- *Improved integration of credit and non-credit courses and programs:* to facilitate the transition from non-credit courses and programs to credits that lead to formal credentials; and

- *Supported distance learning:* another time-saving strategy, combining face-to-face support with distance learning, that might make the balance between school, work, and family more manageable.

Sinclair Community College, a participant in the *Opening Doors* project, has been implementing some of these retention strategies across the college. The Developmental Studies Department, which serves more students than any other department, meets different learning needs through a variety of instructional programs: lectures with in-class tutors, distance learning, staffed computer labs, and small classes. Several occupational programs (allied health and engineering technology) integrate developmental skill building with relevant job-related content. Developmental math classes are being created for several occupational programs. Sinclair is piloting a few modular, competency-based curricula. The college has expanded its course offerings to 20 different locations served by the regional transit system, and classes are taught nights and weekends to meet the needs of working adults and single parents.

These innovations, and others like them being developed by other colleges, will be explored during the conference in plenaries and small groups. Particular attention will be paid to three areas:

- Improving developmental education by increasing its links and relevance to students' occupational goals and educational programs;

- Redesigning programs into "chunks" or modules that increase flexibility, speed completion of courses, and make it easier for working adults to earn credentials incrementally over time; and

- Strengthening instructional quality and student supports.

Advancement—Educational and Occupational

It is somewhat artificial to distinguish *retention* strategies from efforts to help low-income students *advance* from wherever they start in an institution to credentials and experience that enable them to go on in higher education or to get a better job. Colleges that are working hard to improve retention typically are also working to strengthen the various pathways through the

college and out of it. Retention and advancement strategies both demand more flexible specialized programs, suited for populations with different characteristics and needs, linked together in clearly defined ways, with a priority on helping people progress quickly.

The distinction between retention and advancement is drawn here to focus on particular challenges that make the smooth integration of multiple pathways difficult—and to highlight approaches that innovative colleges are using to overcome some of these challenges. Conference sessions on workforce development approaches that are of particular relevance to low-income and low-skill working adults will focus on:

- The relationship of college training programs to high-wage employers, the economy, and the workforce system;
- Links and bridges between non-credit and credit divisions; and
- Partnerships with other community institutions that can expand and strengthen pathways for low-skill individuals.

Community colleges can use their relationship to the local economy and the flexibility of their non-credit, continuing education programs to create powerful learning ladders to higher-wage jobs and careers. Some of the most entrepreneurial colleges that are committed to the equity agenda are doing just that. But as Davis Jenkins (1999) of the University of Illinois at Chicago has emphasized, creating pathways up for the lowest-skilled and most-disadvantaged adults is fraught with difficulty, given the pervasive fragmentation and limitations of existing programs that serve that population:

- Publicly funded employment and training programs focus on getting people into jobs, but they do little in the way of preparing low-skilled individuals to advance to better-paying jobs.
- While community colleges offer more hope for advancement, college-level occupational programs typically have entrance requirements (credentials or tests) that exclude many of those most in need.
- Typical adult literacy and ESL programs are rarely well-connected to either the local economy or to next steps for further education.
- Developmental education in the college is often too abstract and irrelevant for adults whose primary interest is occupational advancement and too slow to yield credentials that can open doors to advancement.

Jenkins and others advocate what is increasingly being called "pathways" or "career ladder" models—a reorientation of education and training that emphasizes integration of typically distinct and disconnected learning programs into a transparent, logical, and accelerated progression upward that addresses the realities of most low-income adults' lives: adult literacy and basic education that can lead quickly to a GED or high school diploma; occupational "bridge" courses that can lead working adults into entry-level, skilled jobs and provide intermediate credentials; and academic and occupational degree programs that yield skills and credentials valued in the labor market. While responsive to the local labor market and its patterns of growth and opportunity, these pathways programs are not simply about technical training: they give working adults options for advancing in their work and in postsecondary education.

Strong continuing education divisions that are responsive to the regional economy may find it difficult to balance their economic development and equity missions. Employers looking for highly skilled workers may contract for targeted upgrade training that is too complex and demanding for low-skill, low-income individuals (Grubb et al. forthcoming). The need to compete with other postsecondary training firms or institutions and to generate revenue for workforce programs can drive colleges toward short-term technical training that does little to address low-wage workers' basic and soft skill needs and that does not bridge easily to credit-based certificates or degrees (Carnevale and Desrochers 2001).

Portland Community College in Oregon is one college that has tried to overcome these obstacles and create pathways to advancement for low-skill, low-income working adults. One strategy has been to improve the connections between the college's credit and non-credit divisions. Teams of faculty and administrators are designing short-term training options that lead to both jobs and credits toward long-term credentials. These accelerated courses are taught by credit-side faculty using credit-side curriculum. ESL training is being integrated into allied health, information technology, and management career pathways so that students with language difficulties can advance quickly in training programs that lead to employment.

In a pilot that the college hopes to expand to other sectors, PCC has restructured its manufacturing technology program to include an open entry/open exit competency-based option. Students sign up for short, subject-specific modules with specific learning activities and competencies. Competencies and curricula are based on industry-accepted standards and revised as employer needs change. Working at their own pace, students take exams to demonstrate competencies whenever they feel ready. The learning center is open twelve hours a day; students stop in and out on their own schedule. Some students have earned two-year certificates or credentials in one year.

Where to from Here?

The discussions taking place March 4-5 at the conference on *Community Colleges and Low Income Populations* come at an important time. Both the policy and the economic environments within which community colleges are addressing the needs of low-income learners are changing, making a strategic reassessment of opportunities and challenges timely.

Later this year, TANF reauthorization will address financing and policy issues that can create or lower barriers to low-wage worker advancement. Other relevant federal laws up for reauthorization in the next two years include the Perkins Vocational Education Act, the Higher Education Act, and the Workforce Investment Act. At the state level, the flush fiscal environment that made possible experiments with new education-related services to low-income youth and working adults is gone. Most states are looking at budget shortfalls, some quite serious. California's CALWorks program, for example, which provided significant support for TANF recipients linking postsecondary education and work, has been targeted for major funding cutbacks.

At the same time, the hot economy of the last decade has cooled. We do not yet know the impact this will have on community colleges. It may lead to additional demand for postsecondary education, as unemployed and underemployed individuals find time to head back to school. It may cool employers' interest in reaching down to train less-skilled workers. It may create opportunities for new combinations of work and learning that might be very helpful to less-skilled

working adults. Whatever the results, it is certain that the changing context will test many community colleges' adaptability and flexibility.

Community Colleges and Low Income Populations has been designed to promote a broad assessment of strategies and opportunities for advancing the equity agenda of community colleges. By design, the conference covers a lot of ground and brings together diverse expertise and knowledge among researchers, policymakers, and practitioners. We have intentionally invited individuals from both the workforce development side and from among those more concerned with the pipeline into postsecondary degree programs and young people's futures. This conversation is not restricted to community college leaders, or state policymakers, or national researchers. Rather, a range of perspectives has been intentionally assembled for this meeting, so that participants can learn of one another's research, reform efforts on the ground, and strategies for affecting policy.

As noted earlier, this conference has three primary goals:

- To strengthen the network of people who care deeply about improving community college outcomes for low-income youth and adults;
- To specify practices and polices that can make it easier for community colleges to help more low-income youth and adults enroll in quality learning programs, complete programs that yield valuable credentials, and transition to further education, employment, or both; and
- To identify priorities for research and action to advance this agenda.

The people attending this conference share a common passion—for the constituency they serve, for the people whose lives they have seen bettered by their engagement with community colleges, and for the institutions that they know hold so much promise as engines of equity. They are individuals with experience and knowledge about what it will take to achieve that promise.

As this paper and the studies summarized in the accompanying bibliography indicate, the general direction of innovative approaches to help low-income populations advance is fairly clear. Islands of exemplary practice and policy exist around the country, and most conference participants would agree on the most exciting and promising of those strategies.

What is needed now is to advance the discussion further, to take a hard look at how to promote greater scale and higher quality in efforts to help low-income community college-goers advance from low-skills and low-wages to self-sufficiency. What are high-leverage, yet realistic, next steps in the areas of research, practice, and policy? How can advocates for this agenda work together more closely, reinforce one another's work, and project a clear set of priorities to a broader audience?

These are the questions that conference participants will address, from their unique perspectives and as a group. Throughout the conference, participants will be asked to track their answers to three questions:

- Where is further research and knowledge-building needed?

- What lessons can be drawn from research and practice on priorities for further experimentation with promising practices at the individual college or state system level?

- What federal or state policy interventions would make it easier for innovative community colleges to address the distinctive and demanding needs of low-income, low-skill young people and adults?

At a minimum, this conference will expand the network of people working to advance the equity agenda in community colleges and accelerate the sharing of research, materials and perspectives among participants. Of course, conference sponsors and organizers have higher hopes. The meeting will succeed if, working together, participants emerge with greater clarity on next steps that can help advance this agenda—and if they leave the meeting with a commitment to continued collaboration and strategic discussions.

The time is propitious for raising the visibility and promoting the viability of community-college-based efforts to help low-income youth and adults advance. The most exciting innovations are difficult and fragile and require significant institutional change. They require support and creative leadership from inside and outside the very best colleges in this nation. And, to diffuse more broadly, they will need better documentation, clarity of design, cost-effectiveness, and evidence of outcomes. There is much to learn, understand, and do. This conference is designed to be one step on the road to more effective analysis, planning, and action.

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Carnevale, Anthony P., and Donna M. Desrochers. 2001. *Help Wanted . . . Credentials Required: Community Colleges in the Knowledge Economy.* Washington, DC: Educational Testing Service and American Association of Community Colleges.

Carnevale, Anthony P., and Richard A. Fry. 2000. *Crossing the Great Divide: Can We Achieve Equity When Generation Y Goes to College?* Washington: Educational Testing Service.

Coley, Richard. 2000. *The American Community College Turns 100: A Look at its Students, Programs, and Prospects.* Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service Policy Information Center.

Golonka, Susan, and Lisa Matus-Grossman. 2001. *Opening Doors: Expanding Educational Opportunities for Low-Income Workers.* New York and Washington: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation and the National Governors Association.

Grubb, W. Norton, Norena Badway, and Denise Bell. Forthcoming. *Community Colleges and The Equity Agenda: The Potential of Non-Credit Education.* Boston: Jobs for the Future:

Grubb, W. Norton. 2001. "Second Chances in Changing Times: The Roles of Community Colleges in Advancing Low Wage Workers." In Richard Kazis and Marc Miller (eds.), *Low Wage Workers in the New Economy.* Washington, DC: Urban Institute Press.

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Community Colleges and Low Income Populations

A Select Bibliography

By **Richard Kazis**
Jobs for the Future

JOBS FOR THE FUTURE

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Prepared for Community Colleges and Low Income Populations: Lessons from Research . . . Priorities for Policy

COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND LOW INCOME POPULATIONS
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Community Colleges and Low Income Populations: Lessons from Research . . . Priorities for Policy

Updated April 2002

Jobs for the Future

The following bibliography includes studies, reports, and books that address different aspects of the topic of the conference Community Colleges and Low Income Populations. *Some works are descriptive, focusing on trends and statistics for community colleges and higher education in general. Others focus on particular challenges facing community colleges as they work to improve their services for low-income populations (e.g., remedial education, instructional quality, student financial aid, transfer, non-credit programming).*

Many of these studies recommend practices and policies that can advance the equity agenda; some propose strategies for promoting desired changes. Together, these publications provide a rich library of data, case studies, assessments, and proposals related to community colleges and their efforts to help low-income youth and adults advance.

Note: The bibliography combines an earlier version distributed at the conference with additional materials from conference participants.

This project has been funded by the Annie E. Casey, Ford, and KnowledgeWorks foundations.

Adelman, Clifford. 1999. *Answers in the Tool Box: Academic Intensity, Attendance Patterns, and Bachelors Degree Attainment.* Washington, DC: US Department of Education.

The report is based on a study of academic and socioeconomic factors, such as high school curriculum intensity and quality, class rank, grade point average, scores on standardized tests, family income and parents' education, and how they relate to eventual attainment of a bachelor's degree. Results show that by far the most significant factor is curriculum intensity and quality. The highest level of mathematics studied has the strongest relationship to eventual attainment of a bachelor's degree. Finishing a course beyond the level of Algebra 2 (for example, trigonometry or pre-calculus) more than doubles the odds that a student who enters postsecondary education will complete a bachelor's degree.

Adelman, Clifford. May/June 2000. *A Parallel Universe, Expanded: Certification in the Information Technology Guild.* Washington, DC: US Department of Education.

An updated version of an earlier article, this paper looks at the certification system that has emerged in the information technology industry, granting 1.7 million certification in the 1990s outside the traditional higher educational structure. Adelman argues for the need to understand this emerging "parallel universe" and to include it in our assessments of future demand for higher education, provision of learning opportunities, and other higher education research and policy. Download at: www.aahe.org/change/paralleluniverse.htm.

Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance. 2000. *Access Denied: Restoring the Nation's Commitment to Equal Educational Opportunity.* Washington, DC: Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance.

The Advisory Committee is an independent body established by federal law to advise the Congress and the Secretary of Education on student financial aid policy. This report documents a growing gap in the availability of financial aid for students from low-income families. The report argues that this gap is serious even for academically qualified young people who could attend four-year schools but do not because of financial need. The report explains how economic and demographic pressures, combined with policy changes away from need-based aid and student decisions in response to inadequate aid, are making inevitable an income-related widening in participation, persistence, and completion gaps in the coming 15 years.

Alssid, Julian L., David Gruber, Davis Jenkins, Christopher Mazzeo, and Brandon Roberts. 2002. *Community College Career Pathways Report.* New York and San Francisco: Workforce Strategy Center.

This national study identifies practices and policies that put community colleges at the center of regional workforce development systems. The research is designed to help community college leaders; community, regional, and state policymakers; and funders understand the ways in which community colleges can effectively provide individuals with education and training that leads into a career progression. Funded by the James irvine Foundation and the Ford Foundation, the study examines and assesses best practices among community colleges, in regional partnerships, and in state policies that foster and support these efforts.

Alssid, Julian L., David Gruber, and Christopher Mazzeo. Forthcoming. *Developing Career Ladders: Contextualized Basic Skills Report.* New York and San Francisco: Workforce Strategy Center.

This national study, to be released in spring 2002, examines best-practice examples of contextualized basic skills as a first step in an ongoing career ladder in exemplary programs on community colleges and community-based organizations. The focus of this report is to encourage practitioners in workforce development to collaborate in the development of career pathways that incorporate contextualized basic skills as a key element. The study, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, consists of a literature review and discussion with leading researchers, the identification of successful program models, and an analysis of best practices in structuring contextualized basic skills as a critical element in developing a career pathway.

California Tomorrow. 2002 *A New Look at the 'New Majority' in California Community Colleges: Keeping the Promise Alive for Students of Color and Immigrants.* Oakland, CA: California Tomorrow.

This is an overview description of an ongoing project designed to develop new insights into how the California Community College system is fulfilling its historic mission for the growing number of students of color and immigrant students it serves. The research will combine a literature review and scan of the policy context; in-depth interviews with 300-450 students and 135-185 faculty/staff on nine campuses throughout California; a deep analysis of available system wide data on student participation, completion and transfer rates; documentation of the use and perceived effectiveness of student support, outreach and retention programs; and an analysis of the diversity-focused professional development available and efforts to diversify the faculty. The project will result in publications designed to impact both policy and practice.

Carnevale, Anthony P., and Donna M. Desrochers. 2001. *Help Wanted . . . Credentials Required: Community Colleges in the Knowledge Economy.* Washington, DC: Educational Testing Service and American Association of Community Colleges.

This report focuses on the need for market-sensitive credentialling in today's changing, demanding economy. The authors examine the causes and consequences of the proliferation of standards for credentialling skill in community colleges. They raise important questions about the proper balance among degrees, certificates, performance-based certifications, vendor certifications, and noncredit customized training. They challenge community colleges to update planning and offerings in the area of short-term training or risk losing this growing segment of the credentials market. They pose the dilemma of balancing social-equity concerns against the needs of communities, employers, and individuals to adapt to changing economic and technological realities, and they explore the complexities and

importance of meeting both academic and vocational missions in the current environment.

Clark, Richard W. 2001. *Dual Credit: A Report of Programs and Policies that Offer High School Students College Credits.* Seattle: Institute for Educational Inquiry.

Clark reports on the status of programs through which high school students acquire dual credits (high school and college) and presents recommendations for actions related to these programs. These programs enroll a large and growing number of students. The report includes the arguments of proponents and critics. From the perspective of this conference, the phenomenon raises two important issues: 1) the potential for restructuring the sequence of formal schooling and the transition to higher education; 2) the danger that dual credits will drive a further wedge between those who are qualified for college by the eleventh grade and less-skilled, frequently low-income students who cannot take advantage of these accelerated programs.

Coley, Richard. 2000. *The American Community College Turns 100: A Look at its Students, Programs, and Prospects.* Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service Policy Information Center.

This is an overview of the status of America's community colleges: student characteristics, enrollment patterns, credentials granted, transfer outcomes, and demographic trends and pressures. Texts and charts convey the diversity of today's community college programs and students and the challenges that these institutions face as they adapt and expand their agendas.

Community College of San Francisco. 2001. *Prospectus for a National Articulation and Transfer Network (NATN): Building an Alternative Pathway for Underserved Student Populations to Access Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic Serving Institutions, and Tribal Colleges and Universities.* San Francisco: City College of San Francisco.

Through this collaboration, the nation's large urban community colleges and select culturally enriched colleges and universities will work with the member schools of the Council of the Great City Schools to establish linkages that provide an alternative pathway through higher education for traditionally under-represented students. Expected outcomes are: 1) increased access to career, program, and college admission information; 2) creation of a K-16+ pipeline that focuses on minority student access, retention, and success; 3) improved levels of access to baccalaureate degrees for under-represented minorities; and 4) creation of a sustainable Web-based, online interactive technological infrastructure for students, parents, guidance counselors, faculty, and participating institutions /segments.

Community College Research Center. 1998-2001. *CCRC Briefs.* New York: Community College Research Center, Teachers College.

CCRC has published a set of excellent briefs on the issues and opportunities facing community colleges that seek to serve low-income populations more effectively. Titles include: *Multiple Missions of Community Colleges: Conflicting or Complementary*; *The New Economic Development Role of the Community College*; *From Black Box to Pandora's Box: Evaluating Remedial/ Developmental Education*; *Community College and Secondary School Collaboration on Workforce Development and Education Reform*; and *Unrealistic Plans and Misdirected Efforts: Are Community Colleges Getting the Right Message to High School Students?*

Education Commission of the States. 1998-2000. *Policy Papers.* Denver: Education Commission of the States.

ECS has published several useful Briefs on the issues and opportunities for community colleges as they try to improve their effectiveness for low-income populations. Titles include: *Fostering Student Retention and Success at the Community College*, *Community Colleges: Connecting the Poor to Good Jobs*, and *Remediation: A Must for the 21st Century Learning Society.*

Education Commission of the States. 2001. *State Funding for Community Colleges: A 50-State Survey.* Denver: Education Commission of the States.

According to ECS's July 2000 survey of its constituents, financing colleges and universities is the number one postsecondary education concern among state policymakers. To give policymakers data with which to address this issue, the ECS Center for Community College Policy provides the results of a 50-state study of community college finance. This report presents a snapshot of "what is" in regard to how states finance two-year colleges, as well as related enrollment policies,

tuition and fees policies, and state accountability measures.

Fitzgerald, Joan. 2000. *Community Colleges as Labor Market Intermediaries: Building Career Ladders for Low-Wage Workers.* Boston: Northeastern University, Center for Urban and Regional Policy.

Fitzgerald looks at the experience of three community colleges—Shoreline, South Seattle and Denver—in the design and development of career ladder programs that help low-wage workers advance into better-paying jobs. She argues that, to succeed, community colleges must not only connect job seekers with good jobs; they must also work with employers to improve job quality. She uses the case studies to draw broad conclusions about the appropriate roles for community colleges in career ladder strategies and the limits to their ability to serve as labor market intermediaries that influence employers to create better jobs. Download at: www.newschool.edu/milano/cdrc/pubs/Fitzgerald.CC.0201.pdf

The FutureWorks Company. Forthcoming. *Student Aid for Working Adults and Lifelong Learning: Findings from an Analysis of Potential Need and Available Resources.* Belmont, MA: The FutureWorks Company.

This study, to be released later this year, analyzes the financial-aid constraints facing working adults who pursue education and training at less than a half-time basis (fewer than six credit hours per semester). The principal finding is that traditional financial assistance programs typically fail to meet the occupational and skill development needs of full-time working adults whose job and family obligations preclude them from taking career-enhancing courses more than half-time. This interim report is part of a larger study on how state and federal financial aid programs can better support the education and training needs of low-income working adults.

Golonka, Susan, and Lisa Matus-Grossman. 2001. *Opening Doors: Expanding Educational Opportunities for Low-Income Workers.* New York and Washington: MDRC and the National Governors Association.

Based on a roundtable involving representatives of community and technical colleges and their public-sector partners, this study presents strategies that could help community colleges do a better job of serving adult welfare recipients and low-wage workers. It emphasizes strategies that can increase access to education and improve the retention of community college students who have little experience of success in either education or the labor market. Recommendations address both college practices and state policies and range from outreach efforts, program and curriculum redesign, employer involvement, public financing issues, and financial aid, supports and incentives that can increase retention.

Grubb, W. Norton. 2001. *Guidance and Counseling in Community Colleges.* CCRC Brief #12. New York: Community College Research Center, Teachers College, Columbia University.

This brief summarizes research led by Norton Grubb at the University of California—Berkeley on the range of counseling services and strategies available at community colleges. Preliminary results indicate an emphasis on "academic" counseling to provide information on the requirements for completion of programs and transfer but relatively little to help students make decisions about their occupational futures. Most colleges emphasize relatively traditional one-on-one counseling sessions, though there is evidence of some innovative alternatives. This is one of a number of Briefs on different community college topics available from the Community College Research Center at www.tc.columbia.edu/ccrc.

Grubb, W. Norton, and Associates. *Honored But Invisible: An Inside Look at Teaching in Community Colleges.* New York: Routledge, 1999.

One of the few close looks at the quality of instruction in community colleges, this study is based on observations of over 250 teachers and interviews with over 50 community college administrators. The authors note the relative neglect of strategies that can improve the quality of teaching within a college. They explore the cultural, institutional, and fiscal challenges to improved instructional quality in academic and vocational degree programs, developmental education, and literacy programs. The authors also point to strategies that hold promise for improving teaching and learning, such as integrating academic and vocational learning, investing in staff development, and creating learning communities, and they address relevant institutional and public policy issues.

Grubb, W. Norton. 2001. "Second Chances in Changing Times: The Roles of Community *Colleges* in Advancing Low Wage Workers." In Richard Kazis and Marc Miller (eds.), *Low Wage Workers in the New Economy*. Washington, DC: Urban Institute Press.

Grubb summarizes the arguments for community colleges' assuming a greater role in the preparation for further education and better employment of low-wage working adults—and he identifies areas for improvement if the potential is to be realized. He distinguishes among different populations that the institution serves and the implications for college planning and programming. He argues for a reform agenda that focuses on instruction, support services, and connections to other programs and to employment.

Hungar, Julie Yearsley, and Janet Lieberman. 2001. *The Road to Equality: Report on Transfer for the Ford Foundation*. New York: Ford Foundation.

This report documents the obstacles facing many students who would like to transfer from community colleges to four-year institutions. It also makes a number of recommendations for college leaders and policymakers on issues ranging from financial aid to admissions and registration, academic support, remedial education, and articulation policies. It includes case studies of state policy environments and transfer performance.

Jenkins, Davis. 2001. "Realizing the Potential of Community Colleges as Bridges to Opportunity for the Disadvantaged." Unpublished paper. Chicago: University of Illinois at Chicago Great Cities Institute.

A discussion paper prepared initially to inform the Mott Foundation, this analysis provides excellent background on the potential of community colleges to be effective bridges to opportunity for low-income individuals—and some of the strategies needed to better realize that potential. The report advocates devoting more attention to involving community colleges in sectoral initiatives, engaging policymakers in addressing funding and other obstacles, and paying particular attention to strategies to support working adults, minority youth, and those seriously deficient in basic skills.

Kipp, Samuel III, Derek Price, Jill Wohlford. 2001. *Unequal Opportunity: Disparities in College Access Among the 50 States*. Indianapolis: Lumina Foundation for Education.

This study assesses the college opportunities available to all citizens across the 50 states. It classifies more than 2,800 colleges and universities in the 50 states and the District of Columbia according to their "accessibility" to typical state residents seeking undergraduate study. Accessibility requires two components: admissibility (whether a college will admit typical college-bound students in that state) and affordability (whether such students can afford to attend). *Unequal Opportunity* presents a comprehensive picture of student accessibility to the nation's undergraduate institutions, whether two-year or four-year, public or private. It highlights inequalities among socioeconomic groups in terms of college access—and how these patterns vary from state to state.

Liebowitz, Marty, Leslie Haynes and Jane Milley. 2001. *Driving Change in Community Colleges: Building Systems for Advancement to Self-Sufficiency*. Boston: Jobs for the Future.

This report, prepared initially for the Ford Foundation, assesses the levers for change that can help move community colleges toward more effective strategies for helping low-income adults advance to family-supporting jobs. Based on interviews with leaders in a number of community colleges and with state and federal policy analysts and advocates, it focuses on three important forces for change: 1) institutional leadership within a community college; 2) partners among local employers and community-based institutions; and 3) policy innovation, particularly at the state level. The report recommends how foundation investments can encourage the effective use of these three levers for innovation and change.

Melendez, Edwin and Carlos Suarez. 2000. *Opening College Doors for Disadvantaged Hispanics: An Assessment of Effective Programs and Practices*. New York: New School University.

This study assessed and collected data on four training demonstration projects funded by the U.S. Department of Labor and developed in collaboration with the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities. The projects aimed to create or promote innovative strategies and approaches within community colleges and universities to provide training and employment

opportunities for economically disadvantaged Hispanics. Two of the programs offered systems to support students as they pursue education and training in the college: The HispanicNET Program of the Albuquerque Technical Vocational Institute; and The Better Opportunities for Hispanics program of Miami Dade Community College. The other two programs create career ladders in the heath care industry: The Direct Care Workers Program at the Borough of Manhattan Community College; and The Accelerated Associate's Program for Licensed Nurses of the Inter-American University of Puerto Rico. Download at: www.newschool.edu/milano/cdrc/newpubs.html.

Melendez, Edwin, Luis Falcon, Carlos Suarez, Lynn McCormick, and Alexandra de Montrichard. 2000. *The Welfare-to-Work Policy Shock: How Community Colleges are Addressing the Challenge.* New York: New School University.

This study examines how, and to what extent, community colleges have implemented welfare-to-work programs in response to welfare policy changes. In part, the community colleges' responses have been determined by the various regulations and funding allocations by state and local authorities. Ultimately, though, the researchers found that the extent to which community colleges have responded to the new policy initiatives has been determined by internal factors such as: the college leaderships' commitment to a comprehensive mission for the college; the existence of programs and prior experiences servicing the disadvantaged; faculty and staff attitudes towards non-degree programs; and on-going relations and collaborations with local labor, business, industries and social service agencies. Download at: www.newschool.edu/milano/cdrc/ford.html.

McCabe, Robert H. 2000. *No One to Waste: A Report to Public Decision-Makers and Community College Leaders.* Washington, DC: Community College Press.

This report is a product of a National Study of Community College Remedial Education, organized by the American Association of Community Colleges. McCabe, the former President of Miami-Dade Community College, builds upon a study of 1,520 randomly selected individuals who began remedial programs in 1990 at 25 different community colleges. Of the students, about one-third completed their remedial programs successfully. Follow-up interviews with 71 percent of these successful completers were conducted as a way of understanding the impact of remedial education on their lives, employment, and further education. The report is a readable summary of arguments for increased support and improvement of remedial programming within two-year colleges.

National Association of Manufacturers. 2001. *The Skills Gap 2001.* Washington, DC: National Association of Manufacturers.

The primary finding of this study, conducted by NAM, its Center for Workforce Success, and Andersen is that U.S. manufacturers face a persistent skills gap in the workforce, despite an economic downturn and despite billions of dollars spent on education and training initiatives in the past decade. This is the third time in ten years that NAM has conducted a survey of skills and training issues in the manufacturing sector, including information on employers' preferred training partners.

Phillippe, Kent, ed. 2000. *National Profile of Community Colleges: Trends and Statistics,* 3rd Edition. Washington, DC: Community College Press.

Text and charts present an overview of America's community colleges. The charts focus on trends in enrollment and student demographics, funding, credentials granted, staffing, community impacts, and fiscal health. The text focuses on issues that are explicit and implicit in the tables and charts.

Phipps, Ronald A., Jessica M. Shedd and Jamie P. Merisotis. 2001. *A Classification System for 2-Year Postsecondary Institutions.* Washington, DC: Institute for Higher Education Policy.

This report explores the development of a classification system for 2-year institutions that can provide a framework for analysis and contribute to the discourse in public policy. The report discusses recent classification strategies put forth by researchers, and outlines a proposed classification system based on data from the Integrated Postsecondary Data Analysis System (IPEDS).

Phipps, Ronald. 1998. *College Remediation: What It Is, What It Costs, What's at Stake.* Washington, DC: Institute for Higher Education Policy.

This study argues for the importance of remediation as a core function of two- and four-year colleges and universities. It analyzes the functions and purposes of remediation, discusses the types of remediation, who participates, and how well they are served; examines the financial costs of remediation; appraises the social and economic costs of not providing remedial programs; and proposes strategies that can reduce the need for remedial programs while also enhancing their effectiveness. The study recommends a number of specific reforms, such as a better alignment of college entry requirements with high school graduation requirements, early intervention and financial aid programs targeted to K-12 students that link guidance and tutoring with financial aid guarantees, and treating remediation as a comprehensive program that is not just about tutoring and skill development.

Regional Technology Strategies, Inc. 2001. *Cultivating Successful Rural Economies: Benchmark Practices at Community and Technical Colleges.* Carrboro, NC: RTS, Inc.

Benchmark Practices for Local Economies is a project funded by the USDA's Fund for Rural America that has identified, through a competitive process, 43 dynamic and effective programs at rural community colleges, both in the U.S. and other countries, that are helping rural businesses and labor forces adapt to the challenges of the new economy. Profiles, case studies, and other information about benchmark practices at local colleges are available for easy reading, browsing, and downloading on an incredibly well designed website, www.rtsinc.org/benchmark.

Roberts, Brandon. 2002. *The Best of Both. Community Colleges and Commmuity-Based Organizations Partner to Better Serve Low-Income Workers and Employers.* Philadelphia, PA: Public/Private Ventures.

This report focuses on the ways in which community colleges and community nonprofits develop, operate and sustain their partnerships. It is concerned with such operational issues as articulating roles and responsibilities, financing project activities, delivering effective support services, working with the private sector and building educational pathways. As such, the report is intended to assist community colleges, community nonprofits and others in developing partnerships to train low-income workers for higher-skilled, higher-wage employment. Download at: www.ppv.org.

Rosenbaum, James. 2001. *Beyond College for All: Career Paths for the Forgotten Half.* New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

A sociologists' brief for the need for better signaling and communication of expectations among employers, colleges, and high schools, this summary of a decade of empirical and theoretical research argues that the high failure rate of young people in community colleges is largely attributable to young people's misreading of the importance of academic preparation in high school to success in college. Rosenbaum, a professor at Northwestern University, proposes that U.S. policymakers learn from the success of informal linkages that often exist between employers and high schools and from the power of formal linkages in some industrial nations to design a system of multiple pathways to careers and further education.

Terenzini, Patrick, Alberto Cabrera, and Elena Bernal. 2001. *Swimming Against the Tide: The Poor in American Higher Education.* New York: College Entrance Examination Board.

This report pulls together what we know about low socioeconomic-status students and their experiences in America's colleges and universities. It demonstrates and documents the substantial inequities that remain in higher education. It presents findings from research on: the college search, choice, and selection process; the characteristics of low socioeconomic-status students; their collegiate experiences; their outcomes in terms of persistence and degree completion; and outcomes in terms of learning, education, earnings, and careers. The report suggests policy efforts to address enrollment and degree completion inequities, outreach to parents in middle and high school years regarding college planning, K-16 policy integration and alignment, and a rethinking of financial aid policies to attack the barriers to college going and completion.

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